



## **New report examines creative neighbourhoods across Canada**

*Artists by Neighbourhood in Canada*, a new report from Hill Strategies Research, highlights creative neighbourhoods across the country – areas where artists interact and help shape the character of their communities. Using mapping technology, the report examines artists as a percentage of the labour force in various postal regions – “neighbourhoods” – based on 2001 census data.

The report demonstrates that there are many significant artistic clusters in urban and rural areas across Canada. The full report and regional summaries of these artistic clusters are available for free from the Hill Strategies Research website (<http://www.hillstrategies.com>).

### **Most creative urban neighbourhoods**

The findings regarding creative urban neighbourhoods confirm the common belief in Canada that many artists locate in Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto. Nine of the 10 urban neighbourhoods in Canada with the highest concentration of artists are in Vancouver, Montreal or Toronto. The other postal region in the top 10 is an island close to Vancouver.

Montreal is home to five of the 10 urban neighbourhoods in Canada with the highest concentration of artists, including the three highest concentrations.

- H2W, in the heart of the plateau area, has 605 artists out of 7,560 total workers, for an artistic concentration of 8.0%. This is the “most creative neighbourhood” in Canada, with an artistic concentration that is 10 times the national average of 0.8%. This area extends from avenue des Pins to avenue du Mont-Royal, between St-Denis and avenue du Parc.
- H2J, adjacent to H2W on the plateau, has an artistic concentration of 6.1%. H2J is northeast of H2W and extends from Rachel to rue des Carrières, between Papineau and St-Denis.
- H2T, adjacent to both H2W and H2J on the plateau, has 5.6% of the local labour force in the arts. H2T extends from avenue du Mont-Royal to avenue Van Horne (and the railway tracks), between St-Denis and Jeanne-Mance.

Toronto is home to three of the 10 neighbourhoods in Canada with the highest concentration of artists, including:

- M5R, the Annex area, which has 845 artists out of 15,590 total workers, for an artistic concentration of 5.4%. This concentration is almost seven times the national average and ranks the area 4<sup>th</sup> among Canadian neighbourhoods.

- M6J, West Queen West, which has 5.2% of its labour force in arts occupations, 5<sup>th</sup> in Canada.
- M6G, surrounding the Little Italy area, adjacent to both M5R and M6J, which has 5.1% of the local labour force in arts occupations, the 6<sup>th</sup> highest level in Canada.

British Columbia artists are distributed among many postal regions. Two B.C. areas are tied for 7<sup>th</sup> in Canada, with 5.0% of the local labour force in arts occupations:

- V8K (Saltspring Island); and
- V6A (east Vancouver).

Two other Montreal postal areas have an artistic concentration of 5.0%, tied for 7<sup>th</sup> in Canada: H2V (Outremont) and H2L (Montreal Papineau, below Rachel).

### **Most creative rural areas**

*Artists by Neighbourhood in Canada* shows that there are many significant artistic clusters in rural areas across Canada, but these rural clusters have not yet reached the same concentration as in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.

- Nunavut's X0A region is the most creative rural area in Canada. This area, encompassing Baffin Island (Iqaluit, Cape Dorset, etc.), has 230 artists among 6,700 total workers, for an artistic concentration of 3.4%. This is over four times the national average of 0.8%.
- Nova Scotia's B0R region is the rural area in Canada with the second-highest concentration of artists. Artists comprise 2.2% of the labour force in this postal region, which is inland west of Halifax.
- The V0R region of Vancouver Island, an area that surrounds Tofino and Clayoquot Sound, has an artistic concentration of 1.9%, 3<sup>rd</sup> highest among rural postal areas in Canada.
- In the V0N region, a large swath of coastal British Columbia to the north and northwest of Vancouver, artists comprise 1.7% of the overall labour force, tied for 4<sup>th</sup> among rural postal areas in Canada.
- The V0S region, a rural area further southeast on Vancouver Island, also has 1.7% of the local labour force in arts occupations.
- Nunavut's X0C postal region is tied for 6<sup>th</sup> among rural regions with an artistic concentration of 1.5%.
- The B0J region, a coastal area east of Halifax, is also tied for 6<sup>th</sup> among rural regions with an artistic concentration of 1.5%.
- The L0S region of southwestern Ontario (west of Niagara Falls, including Pelham) also has an artistic concentration of 1.3%, tied for 8<sup>th</sup> among rural areas of Canada.
- The V0P region, the north-central portion of Vancouver Island, also has 1.3% of the local labour force in arts occupations.
- In the K0G region of eastern Ontario (northeast of Kingston), artists comprise 1.2% of the labour force, ranking 10<sup>th</sup> among rural areas in Canada.

Although we were informed about some other creative rural areas – such as Meacham, Saskatchewan – during our “*Canada’s most creative neighbourhood*” contest, no other rural postal areas have an artistic concentration that is as high as the areas listed above. This is partly due to postal geography, which groups towns like Meacham with other communities around Saskatoon in the S0K postal region.

### **Why is it important to track creative neighbourhoods?**

The arts contribute to the quality of life as well as the social and economic vitality of communities. Recent research has also examined how the arts help attract talented people, jobs and investment to communities. On a personal level, the arts can stimulate, inspire and entertain.

A strong artistic community can therefore enhance the whole community’s well-being. For these reasons, it is important to identify and track creative neighbourhoods – areas that are attractive to artists for a number of reasons: inexpensive housing, access to employment and self-employment opportunities, access to resources (such as studio space, galleries, rehearsal and performance space, artist-run centres and associations), social networks, physical environment, family reasons and more.

*Artists by Neighbourhood in Canada* can be used by associations, arts funders, policy-makers and others to ensure that programs and services are tailored appropriately to arts communities across the country. Further research could also examine the correlation between creative neighbourhoods and other local attributes that may help attract and retain artists.

### **Report and data notes**

The full report, funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage (Canadian Cultural Observatory and Arts Policy Branch), and the Ontario Arts Council, is available free of charge on the websites of Hill Strategies Research (<http://www.hillstrategies.com>) and the funding organizations. The Hill Strategies Research website also provides detailed tables showing the number and concentration of artists in postal regions across Canada. The report is the twelfth in a *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series by Hill Strategies Research.

The data is drawn from a custom data request from Statistics Canada’s 2001 census, conceived of and commissioned by Hill Strategies Research. The census captures information about the occupation at which a person worked the most hours between May 6 and 12, 2001.

Nine arts occupations are included in the analysis:

- actors;
- artisans and craftspersons;
- conductors, composers and arrangers;
- dancers;
- musicians and singers;
- other performers (such as circus performers and puppeteers);
- painters, sculptors and other visual artists;
- producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations; and
- writers.

The occupational categories are not a perfect fit for all artists but do provide a reasonable approximation of arts employment and self-employment. No census data is released for areas below a population size of 40. Postal areas with fewer than 40 artists are noted as “not reliable”. Please see the full report for census data limitations.